

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 are pending. By this Amendment, the preamble of Claims 1-4 and 6 are amended. Applicants respectfully submit no new material is presented herein.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Regarding Claim 1, the Office Action asserts the preamble is not clear and that it is also unclear as to which party, i.e., the supplier, manufacturer, or sales agency who is selling the mechanical component. Applicants respectfully submit the claims have been amended responsive to the rejection. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Number 6,898,580 to Curran et al. (Curran). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1 recites a marketing support system for allowing a supplier, which manufacturers and sells to at least one sales agency a mechanical component having a rolling element and a sliding bearing, to support the at least one sales agency selling said mechanical component to a purchaser, wherein a communication device of the supplier is connected to an open network and comprises: technical information service means for providing technical information required to select said mechanical component; and sales agency introduction means for introducing the at least one sales agency selling said mechanical component, and a communication device of the at least one sales agency is connected to the open network and comprises: order processing means for taking an order from the purchaser to purchase the mechanical component

and for electronically processing the purchase order, and wherein the purchaser accesses the communication device of the supplier over the open network to select and purchase the mechanical component from one of the at least one sales agency.

Applicants respectfully submit Curran fails to disclose or suggest such features.

For example, Applicants respectfully note Curran fails to disclose or suggest a supplier supporting a sales agency in selling an item (e.g., a computer board) to a purchaser. Curran does disclose a custom product design and price quotation system and method. In particular, Curran discloses a system where a potential purchaser or customer is able to design a customized product (e.g., a computer board) after selecting each characteristic of the customized product from a detailed list made available to the potential purchaser or customer over the open network. Further, while Curran discloses a system and method for providing price quotes or estimates for the customized product, Curran does not disclose order processing means for electronically processing a purchase order of the customized product. In effect, Curran discloses an automated system and method of providing cost and feasibility information to the potential purchaser of the customized product. After exhaustively reviewing Curran, Applicants have not been able to locate any disclosure or suggestion that the potential purchaser actually selects and purchases the customized product from a sales agency introduced to the potential purchaser by a communication device of a supplier. Curran further discloses a virtual product designer (VPD) web site which provides or at least extracts from the internet information relating to the characteristics and other features of the customized product that are input by the potential purchaser. Curran does not disclose or suggest whether the VPD is a supplier or sales agency, rather, it appears as if the

VPD is a tool that provides a potential purchaser with estimations on anticipated costs for the customized product based on information provided by the potential purchaser as well as information estimating how long the customer can expect for such a product to be manufactured and delivered. However, Curran does not disclose or suggest who or what party is going to supply the components needed to manufacture the product, what party is actually going to process the sales transaction with the customer, and/or if the customer is able to select and purchase the product from a sales agency.

To qualify as prior art, each feature of a rejected claim must be disclosed or suggested by the applied art. As explained above, Curran does not disclose or suggest each and every feature recited by Claim 1. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit Claim 1 is not anticipated by or rendered obvious in view of Curran and should be deemed allowable.

Claims 2-9 depend from Claim 1. It is respectfully submitted that these dependent claims be deemed allowable over Curran for at least the same reasons Claim 1 is allowable, as well as for the additional subject matter recited therein.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application, withdrawal of the outstanding rejections, allowance of Claims 1-9, and the prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowability are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

In the event that the filing of this paper is not deemed timely, Applicants petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any petition fee for the extension of time and any other fees that may be required in relation to this paper can be charged to Deposit Account No. 01-2300, **referencing Docket No. 100725-00051.**

Respectfully submitted,



Murat Ozgu
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 44,275

Customer No. 004372

ARENT FOX PLLC
1050 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.,
Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20036-5339
Tel: (202) 857-6000
Fax: (202) 638-4810

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